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Bobo: Why Billy can't do stats (or Why Billy does historical research)

WHY BILLY CAN'T DO STATS (or WHY BILLY DOES HISTORICAL RESEARCH)

By

*Billy Bob Bobo**

**The author used his nom de plume
to protect the guilty.***

Recently, I changed offices. In the process of the move, I discovered a box of "historical documents". These were the unpublished notebooks from my Ph.D. courses. Being the historian that I am, I could not throw away documents such as these. Instead, I started an investigation (reminiscing) of the days when I was a young, starry-eyed scholar.

However, my notebooks from my Stats classes revealed a different story. Much to my chagrin, I uncovered old tests and examinations. I had long ago repressed the memory of those painful classes with which I had such a struggle and so little success. As you can imagine, the results of these tests were nothing to brag about—far from it—the results probably should remain with the other skeletons in my closet. However, from these documents, I gained new insight to why my career in research became bent towards historical research. My hypothesis is that I was such a poor student of statistics that I decided to do something (anything) other than empirical research.

The definitions below were taken from questions and answers from these historically significant old tests of mine. My answers to even the most basic statistical "identification" question supports the above hypothesis.

1. PARADIGM - two dimes or twenty cents.
2. MULTICOLLINEARITY - a social disease curable by massive injections of penicillin.

3. BERNOULLI - a type of Italian pasta, its green I think.
4. KURTOSIS - foul breath.
5. HETEROSKEDASTICITY - the tendency toward sexual normality.
6. HOMOGENEITY - the opposite of heteroskedasticity.
7. DEVIANT - another pseudo sexual/medical term concerning abnormality.
8. OUTLIER - (a) a bum lying around outside or, (b) a champion storyteller - my brother, for example, could out lie everyone, now he is a very successful lawyer.
9. ORTHOGONALITY - the subject of birdwatching.
10. TCHEVYCHEFF - a cook at the nearby GM auto assembly plant.
11. DURBIN-WATSON - a suburb of a large South African city.
12. BOX JENKINS and SOLOMAN FOUR SQUARE DESIGN - forerunners of the Rubic's Cube.
13. MEAN - state of being nasty, vile, contemptuous and repulsive, for example a Stats instructor.
14. MEDIAN - the middle divide of the Interstate Highway where it is illegal to drive.
15. BLOCKING FACTOR - the middle of the football team's offensive tackles, guards and the center.

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16. REPEATED MEASURES - a musical composition technique in which the same theme, harmony, etc. is used over and over again, sometimes this can be represented by a Coda sign.
 17. REGRESSION - moving backwards, reversing, getting worse.
 18. TWO-TAILED TEST - an English Lit exam on the Dicken's novel, *A TAIL OF TWO CITIES*.
 19. SIGNIFICANCE AT THE OH FIVE LEVEL - the time work ends and play begins, when the factory whistle blows for the last time for the day.
 20. CHI-SQUARED TEST - part of a fraternity initiation rite.
 21. SUBJECTS - Courses that I am taking such as Accounting, Economics, and Statistics.
 22. F RATIO - another measure of my grade point average computed by dividing the number of Fs received by the number of courses attempted.
 23. NESTED DESIGN - the study of how birds construct their nests, part of orthogonality.
 24. APRIORI - an Italian monk who bred peas or peacocks and discovered the theory of relativity or something.
 25. MULTIVARIATE NORMAL - another pseudo-sexual term, see Heteroskedasticity.
 26. ASYMPTOTIC NORMALITY - another type of sexual normalcy. I don't know why Stats and the Stats instructor are so hung up on sex. Its nothing but sex, sex, sex in this class.
 27. DUNCAN - a character from Shakespear's MacBeth.
 28. TYPE ONE ERROR - signing up for this Stats class.
 29. CONFIDENCE LEVEL - real low, after getting back the last Stat test.

***So that this work is never attributed to Bill Shakespear, Bill Beaver, Bill Bradley, the Dollar Bill or any other Bill, William D. ("Bill" or "Billy Don") Samson of the University of Alabama takes full responsibility.*

CALL FOR PAPERS— COMMUNAL SOCIETIES

The National Historic Communal Societies Association will hold its 15th annual conference at the restored Moravian sites of Old Salem and Bethabara in Winston-Salem, North Carolina from October 6-8, 1988. The theme of the conference is "Communal Societies from Colonial Days to the Present." Papers dealing with any aspect (including accounting and business practices) of any and all communal societies are welcome. Individuals interested in participating in the conference should submit at least a one-page summary of their paper and a brief personal resume to: Dr. Thomas J. Hauptert, Director, The Moravian Archives, 4 East Bank Street, Winston-Salem, NC 27101-5307.